Janice K. Brewer
Governor

Michael Branham
Director

PROGRAM EVALUATION

The Department of Juvenile Corrections evaluates program effectiveness by using a tool known as the Correctional Program Checklist (CPC). To date, five institutional and six community based programs have been evaluated. More community based programs are scheduled for evaluation this year.

The CPC is an assessment tool designed to quantify program quality by determining how closely correctional programs meet known principles of effective intervention. Through several recent studies, Dr. Ed Latessa and his colleagues at the University of Cincinnati have found high correlations between scores on the CPC and measures of recidivism. The CPC tool resulted from an assessment of over 40,000 offenders—both adult and juvenile—and over 400 institutional and community based correctional programs.

The CPC is divided into two areas: Capacity and Content. The Capacity area is designed to measure whether a correctional program has the capability to deliver evidence based interventions and services for offenders. There are three domains within Capacity: Leadership and Development, Staff, and Quality Assurance. The Content area focuses on the substantive domains of Offender Assessment and Treatment. Each section, as well as the overall program, is scored as either "Highly Effective;" "Effective;" "Needs Improvement;" or "Ineffective."

Programs are evaluated through structured staff and youth interviews conducted by ADJC Research and Development personnel (R&D). Other information reviewed includes policy and procedure manuals, treatment materials, curriculum and a sample of case files. In addition, treatment groups are observed and assessed. Once the information is gathered and reviewed, the program is scored by R&D staff, and a report is generated which identifies program strengths and weaknesses. Recommendations for improvement are given and program scores are compared to national averages.

There are several advantages to the CPC. First, it is applicable to a wide range of correctional programs. Second, it allows R&D to "quantify" the quality of a program. This allows comparisons across programs, as well as benchmarking. Third, the entire process can be completed quickly. Usually the information can be gathered in a day or two, and a report produced within a few weeks. Finally, it is designed to improve program effectiveness and the integrity. The Administrative Office of the Courts has recently begun using a similar tool called the Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP), and we look forward to sharing information with them so we can improve the services provided to delinquent youth in Arizona.